



California Regional Water Quality Control Board

San Francisco Bay Regional Water Quality Control Board

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TO: Interested Parties

DATE: February 18, 2005

FROM: Stephen A. Hill, Chief
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SUBJECT: February 2005 Update to Environmental Screening Levels ("ESLs") Technical Document

Staff of the San Francisco Bay Regional Water Quality Control Board (Water Board) has prepared a February 2005 update to the technical document *Screening For Environmental Concerns at Sites With Contaminated Soil and Groundwater* (Interim Final - February 2005). This update reflects recent revisions to toxicity factors presented in the USEPA Preliminary Remediation Goals document ("PRGs", October 2004) as well as references to recent publications regarding the evaluation of vapor intrusion concerns.

The updated ESL document also incorporates California Human Health Screening Levels (CHHSLs) for soil and soil gas published in December 2004 by the Office of Environmental Health Hazard Assessment. These screening levels address direct exposure to soil and potential vapor intrusion into buildings. Screening levels very similar to the CHHSLs were included in the July 2003 edition of the ESL document. The February 2005 edition of the ESL document includes revisions to make correlative screening levels in that document more consistent with approaches used to develop the CHHSLs. As discussed in the accompanying guidance document, the CHHSLs do not address all potential environmental concerns that may be present at sites where contaminated soil and groundwater are identified. Evaluation of additional concerns must be carried out separately. The updated ESL document offers one approach to accomplish this.

A more detailed summary of updates is provided in Chapter 1 and Appendix 8 of the ESL document. The document is intended to help expedite the identification of potential environmental concerns at sites where contaminated soil and groundwater have been identified and ultimately expedite the cleanup and redevelopment of these properties. As an alternative to preparing a detailed, baseline environmental risk assessment, soil, groundwater and other data collected at a site can be directly compared to the ESLs and the need for additional actions determined in an expedited risk assessment. This approach has been shown to be especially effective and efficient at sites with limited or relatively straightforward types of contamination, where the preparation of a more formal risk assessment may not be warranted or feasible due to time and cost constraints.

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